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ABSTRACT

Information and recommendations concerning foreign language in the elementary school (FLES) center about a set of criteria for examining proposals and programs made in 1954. Included among the criteria are the importance of goals and their cooperative development, provision for the mental health of teachers and children, sound teaching-learning principles, good teaching materials, and proper evaluation. Considerable attention is also given to the examination of organizational issues and four different program considerations. Other topics include selection of programs for study, introduction of school language programs, current issues and viewpoints, and facilitating of elementary school language instruction. A bibliography is furnished. (RL)

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Foreign Language Teaching in Elementary Schools

AN EXAMINATION OF CURRENT PRACTICES

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From the Association

RECENT INCREASES in cross cultural contacts have focused attention on the teaching of the foreign languages. The proposals dealing with the secondary school curriculum have not been especially new but the proposals dealing with the public elementary school curriculum have raised a novel set of problems. It becomes necessary to look at this new set of problems in an open-minded and fundamental manner since the universal teaching of a foreign language or several foreign languages in the elementary school would open up new problems of method, materials and teacher education. The introduction of such instruction on any broad scale would also bring about a reassessment of the purpose of the elementary school and the goals of elementary school instruction.

Those who would introduce foreign language in the elementary school have been motivated by a very understandable logic; but in general the practical problems involved have not been considered. It is fortunate that a number of curriculum people immediately took the whole problem under study. This publication represents an able summarization and analysis of the thinking, the practices and the research in this field. An outstanding feature of the study is the evaluation of programs of foreign language teaching in terms of a very basic set of criteria applicable to any teaching-learning procedure. Certainly this booklet will make it possible for any school person or lay citizen to understand and appraise the existing programs in foreign language instruction for elementary school children.

The authors show what is being done and also make recommendations concerning the ways in which language can be utilized in the enrichment of the elementary school curriculum without going so far as to introduce a special subject into the curriculum. Problems of method and organization are dealt with as well as implications of foreign language instruction for improving international understanding and furthering a peaceful state of affairs in the world. The recommendations provide a ready curriculum guide for anyone dealing with foreign language teaching.

All members of the Association are indebted to Elizabeth Engle Thompson and Arthur E. Hamalainen for the research and writing involved in preparation of this booklet. Alice M. Miel, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y., served as continuing representative of the Executive Committee in working with the coauthors of the booklet. The following members of the Executive Committee read and gave advice concerning the manuscript: William M. Alexander, professor of education, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee; Florence E. Beardsley, director of elementary education, State Department of Education, Salem, Oregon; Susan Crutchfield, director of elementary education, Public Schools, Galveston, Texas; Arthur W. Foshay, executive officer, Horace Mann–Lincoln Institute for School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York; Jane Franseth, specialist for rural education, Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.; and Robert S. Gilchrist, superintendent of schools, Public Schools, University City, Missouri.

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Rodney Tillman, executive secretary, ASCD, and Margaret Gill, associate secretary, ASCD, read the original manuscript and gave helpful editorial suggestions. Robert R. Leeper, editor and associate secretary, ASCD, worked with the manuscript in all its stages, did final editing, and guided publication of the booklet. Florence O. Skuce, editorial assistant, NEA Publications Division, assisted at all stages in production of the booklet. Cover and title page are the work of de Graffenried W. List, artist.

March 1958

G. Robert Koopman, *President, ASCD*
For the Executive Committee

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Introduction

THIS BOOKLET reports on foreign language teaching as observed in several communities of the United States. Following the actual observations, an examination of the programs is made in the light of basic curriculum principles and of principles of teaching and learning which are generally accepted in education today.

Suggestions are offered to those interested citizens who might wish to study their own situations to determine whether a language program is feasible for their schools. For those who find that such a program would be desirable in their school system, suggestions for implementation are given.

It is hoped that this booklet will be of value to all persons interested in the area of foreign language instruction in the elementary schools.

In 1954, Mrs. Thompson visited and observed the elementary language programs in a number of schools throughout the country. She attended many meetings and workshops in the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school, and consulted the several persons mentioned in the acknowledgment section which follows.

With these experiences as a background, she wrote an initial report which evaluated the validity of foreign language teaching in the elementary school and made some suggestions for organizing a sound program. Dr. Hamalainen recently added material from the latest research in the field, made some revisions, and with Mrs. Thompson prepared this booklet for publication.

Because of her interest in promoting international understanding Mrs. Thompson spent the entire year, 1956-57, visiting schools in 10 countries of Europe, in Turkey, Iraq, India, Thailand, Malaya, in the Philippines and Japan. In most of these schools English was being taught as the foreign language. She found that to speak with the peoples throughout the world in their native languages she would have needed the knowledge of at least 25 different foreign tongues, not just one or two. Very seldom were the languages usually studied here in the United States useful in the Orient. Obviously it would have required any traveler many years of language instruction to communicate with these peoples of various nationalities in their many different tongues and dialects.

However in most places throughout the world there were native peoples who in some manner could speak English. The fact that their accent or grammatical construction was not always correct made little difference in human relations and in having one's needs understood. It is important to note that when English was not spoken, there were other ways than the use of language, such as gestures, facial expressions and actions, for communicating one's attitudes and warm feelings of friendliness for them, and interest in them and their problems. It was observed that when one remained long enough in a particular country words and expressions were soon learned which answered one's needs. This vocabulary grew out of actual situations and the desire to communicate with people in their language. The amount of this learning depended largely on the extent to which these foreign friends spoke only in their own tongues.

This year of travel and personal foreign language experience through living with foreign peoples throughout the world was interesting to Mrs. Thompson in the light of this study of foreign language teaching. It served also to corroborate for her many of the ideas expressed in this booklet.

Acknowledgments

GRATITUDE is expressed for a grant[1] which afforded Mrs. Thompson the opportunity to study the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary schools. It also enabled her to visit and observe during the school year of 1954 many of the outstanding language programs in this country. The Great Neck Board of Education graciously gave the time required to carry out the visits. Appreciation is extended to children, teachers, supervisors and administrators in the following school systems which were visited: Atlantic City, New Jersey; Brighton, New York; Carlsbad, New Mexico; Cleveland, Ohio; El Paso, Texas; Fairfield, Connecticut; Jamestown, New York; Lake Forest, Illinois; Lawrence, Kansas; Los Angeles, California; Oakwood (a suburb of Dayton), Ohio; San Diego, California; and Tucson, Arizona. Staff members in Winnetka, Illinois, and Westport, Connecticut, shared their explorations and considerations regarding the advisability of a foreign language program in elementary schools.

Appreciation is also expressed to the following persons for their helpful suggestions and reactions, although not all listed may agree with the conclusions reached in this pamphlet: Carlyle Hoyt, superintendent of schools, and Mary Thompson, supervisor of the Fairfield language program; Samuel Guarnaccia, dean, Graduate School of Spanish, Middlebury College; Stephen A. Freeman, vice president and director of language schools, Middlebury College; Arthur Selvi of State College of Connecticut at New Britain; and also Theodore Andersson, professor of education, the University of Texas, Austin, formerly French professor and director of the Master's Program in Teaching at Yale University; the Fairfield Board of Education; members of Boards of Education and Foreign Language Committees in Winnetka, Illinois and Manhasset, New York; Maurice Ahrens, professor of education, University of Florida, Gainesville, formerly elementary curriculum coordinator, Public Schools, Corpus Christi, Texas; Christian Arndt, International Education, New York University; Clara Belle Baker, National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois; Marian Carswell, assistant superintendent, Winnetka, Illinois; Edgar Dale, Educational Research and Research Techniques, Ohio State University, Columbus; Dorothy Hayes, chairman of Education

[1] Blakemore Educational Foundation, Great Neck, New York.

Department, New Paltz State Teachers College, New Paltz, New York; G. Robert Koopman, Department of Public Instruction, Lansing, Michigan; Helen K. Mackintosh, associate chief, Elementary Schools, Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C.; Harold Rugg, professor emeritus, Teachers College, Columbia University; Harold Shane, professor of education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois; Carleton Washburne, chairman of Graduate Study in Teacher Education, Brooklyn College, New York; and to Hazel Prehm and Nova Nestrick of the Public Schools, Great Neck, New York, for reading the original manuscript. To Alice Miel, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University, appreciation is expressed for her interest and encouragement as well as the significance which she attached to the original report. Her contribution helped to make the publication of this booklet a reality.

ELIZABETH ENGLE THOMPSON
ARTHUR E. HAMALAINEN

Foreign Language Teaching in Elementary Schools

Selecting Language Programs for Study

The types of existing foreign language programs which were observed in schools visited in order to get an overview of practice throughout the country included:

1. School systems which have had programs in operation for a long period of time, are well known for the outstanding work they have accomplished in the field of language teaching, and which have developed significant materials, such as courses of study, recordings, slides, etc. These included Cleveland, Ohio; San Diego, and Los Angeles, California

2. Newly established programs which utilize teacher workshops as a means of teacher preparation, and in which the teaching is done by language specialists with some cooperation by the classroom teachers. These included Carlsbad, New Mexico; and Jamestown, New York

3. Programs in operation for a long time which have utilized teacher workshops as a means of teacher preparation, and in which the classroom teachers do a large part of the foreign language teaching, with assistance through classroom demonstrations and materials provided by the supervisors and special language teachers. This group included Los Angeles and San Diego, California

4. Foreign language programs with no workshops in which foreign language specialists or high school language teachers are responsible for the teaching

5. A school system where the language program is selective—only for children with high I.Q.'s. Here, foreign language is a part of the general enrichment program for this group. Cleveland, Ohio, follows this plan

6. School systems which start foreign language teaching at various points from kindergarten throughout the grades of the elementary school

7. Programs established in the public schools through cooperation with a university or college in the city, partially supported financially by the institution in return for the opportunity for foreign language elementary education majors to do practice teaching

8. Programs located in suburban communities

9. Programs which had been in operation for some time but were discontinued because of more important and pressing needs

10. Programs representative of different organizational plans and community backgrounds.

In each city visited an attempt was made to see at least one class at each level of instruction in each language taught. In one or two cases where this was impossible, a day was spent discussing the problem with the principal, language teacher, or supervisor. The programs were also discussed with classroom teachers.

When Foreign Language Programs Begin

Foreign language programs are not new. According to Meras, as early as 1608 Catholic missionaries were teaching in that part of the continent that is now Maine. The very wealthy colonists had their children tutored in foreign languages. As early as 1749 both French and German were taught in an academy in Philadelphia; Spanish was first taught there in 1766. There has been a varying trend in the teaching of a foreign language depending upon our relationship and cultural ties with a particular country. In the 1850's German began to replace French due in part to the large influx of German immigrants in such midwestern cities as Chicago and Milwaukee. German maintained this popularity until World War I when it was almost completely eliminated and has never since regained its former status. Between the two World Wars the teaching of French increased greatly due to a cultural and social renaissance with French ideals and ideas predominating. Spanish also gained more prominence after World War I because, with the loss of German markets in South America, it was presumed that there would be a vast expansion of American business in that part of the world and, therefore, knowledge of the Spanish language would be a necessity.[1] In 1915 nearly 41 percent of our entire public high school population were enrolled in modern foreign language classes. By 1922 this figure had dropped to 31.6 percent; by 1928 to 28 percent; by 1934 to 24.4 percent; by 1949 to 13.7

[1] Edmond A. Meras. *A Language Teacher's Guide.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954. p. 1-8.

percent. Today it stands at about 14.2 percent (based on enrollments in 40 states and the District of Columbia).[2]

The teaching of foreign languages in the elementary grades was done on a large scale in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1922, and in Oakwood, Ohio, in 1925, although in the latter by 1940 the teaching was restricted to one class. Great Neck, New York, had a program for over 10 years prior to 1940 when it was discontinued. Manhasset, New York, has also eliminated its program established a number of years ago. In 1952, 87 communities had some foreign language programs in the elementary grades. By 1956 it was reported that 357 cities and towns in 44 states had similar programs.[3] This rather sudden growth in the past few years received impetus through a speech in 1952 by former U. S. Commissioner of Education Earl McGrath in St. Louis, Missouri, and through statements by persons eminent, in most cases, in fields other than education. In examining the statistics of this phenomenal growth in the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school, Anne S. Hoppock[4] has said that of the 357 cities and towns which had programs:

> Ninety-four were conducted at college, in campus or demonstration schools, or in connection with summer workshops.
>
> Twenty-six were summer programs only.
>
> Eighty-five were voluntary, sometimes conducted in out-of-school hours, some on a fee basis.
>
> Thirty-nine were for "gifted" children.
>
> In a considerable number of districts, the program is available to relatively few children because the program is experimental, or because only a few elementary classroom teachers are working "on their own" with their children.

The report further specifies that 33 programs were being discontinued in 1955 and that 58 were introduced in 1955.

Only 39 programs have been operating prior to 1950. Of these, 13 are in demonstration or campus schools. A number are on a voluntary basis, or for "gifted" children. Highly significant is the fact that a number of the old programs are in border states, where some of the children have need for a second language.

[2] *Hispania.* "Facts and Opinion on That Question of Foreign Language in American Schools and Colleges." (Editorial) Volume 38, Number 4, December 1955.

[3] K. W. MILDENBERGER. "Foreign Languages in the Grades." *American School Board Journal* 133:1; October 1956.

[4] ANNE S. HOPPOCK. "Foreign Language in the Elementary School." *NJEA Review,* Volume 30, Number 3, November 1956 (reprint).

Programs which have started since 1950 might reasonably be considered as still experimental. It is surely difficult to draw final conclusions about the worth of a program until the elementary school children involved have moved through the high school, perhaps through early adulthood.

From examination of the figures as presented in this national survey, three conclusions seem evident: (a) the movement is not as widespread in public elementary schools as might appear at first glance; (b) in many of the programs only a few children participate since the programs are on an experimental basis or for the gifted only; and (c) sufficient time has not elapsed for most programs to prove conclusively their value.

Current Issues in Teaching Foreign Languages

Widely evident today among teachers, supervisors, administrators, superintendents, as well as linguists and lay citizens is the growing interest in foreign language teaching in the elementary school. It is important, therefore, for school people to raise questions as to the validity of the idea of foreign languages in the elementary school, and to check the consistency of current methods and procedures of organization in the light of modern educational principles and research. Before proceeding to establish programs, educators need to probe for and arrive at justifiable solutions to many important questions. Some of these questions are the following:

1. Are some of the important goals of education to be accomplished more effectively by adding the teaching of foreign languages to the elementary school program, or by other innovations and practices?

2. What are justifiable reasons or criteria for including any subject or area of experience, including foreign language, in the already full school curriculum?

3. In view of the critical needs and problems facing American schools, is the inclusion of one or more foreign languages realistic and justifiable, or are there other more effective ways to accomplish the purposes or goals of such instruction?

4. How are languages learned with greatest facility and in keeping with sound social and educational purposes?

5. If the inclusion of languages is justifiable, how can schools accomplish the goals of such instruction in view of teacher shortages and a scarcity of teachers with linguistic ability?

6. Should languages be taught in all schools to all children in all communities in our country? Which languages will the children need in today's world?

7. How should such programs be developed? At what levels should the foreign language be started? What teaching methods, materials, experiences are best in accomplishing the goals of the program? How can these goals and methods be consistent with the democratic goals of modern education?

8. What sound educational research data are available from the many existing programs to validate the purposes, the methods and organizational procedures and outcomes or achievements claimed for foreign language teaching in the elementary schools?

9. How and why have schools instituted foreign language programs? Is the trend increasing? For what purposes? What methods have been and are being used? Are these conducive to accomplishing the educational goals of these school systems and consistent with the philosophy of modern elementary education? What means of evaluation are being employed in schools with such programs?

This booklet does not purport to give specific answers to the foregoing questions, but it is hoped that it will stimulate thinking and clarify some of the basic issues relative to teaching foreign languages in the elementary school.

Viewpoint Regarding Foreign Language Teaching

In our ever shrinking world the attainment of goals of better communication and understanding among its peoples is imperative if we are to live in peace and security. It is an obvious fact known to almost everyone that we are only about one day's distance from every other place in the world. Not only are we this close to each other in time, but in increasing numbers we are establishing more contact with each other. "In recent years 440,000 Americans have been living and working outside the United States. In addition, 750,000 to 800,000 Americans go abroad each year, 15,000 for study in foreign lands. Simultaneously some 35,000 students from 126 different nations have been coming to study in 1500 colleges and universities in the United States."[5] Now the recent scientific developments culminating in Sputnik and Explorer dramatize a further challenge for working toward the betterment of international understanding.

American education has a primary responsibility for helping us to live with neighboring peoples in this world grown smaller, more interdependent, and with a more mobile population. There is need for the promotion of cooperation, mutual respect, and adequate human relations among the peoples of the world. This goal has been recognized

[5] W. V. KAULFERS. "Foreign Languages for Today's Needs." Bibliography. *Progressive Education* 32:151-55; September 1955.

in the philosophy of American public education and subscribed to for many years by the various national educational associations.

The viewpoint is widely held that an emphasis upon the teaching of adequate human relations in elementary and high school programs is more important today than ever before.

School staffs have a responsibility to assume leadership in working with communities toward this end. Development of skill in language communication is certainly important for improved international communication among diplomats, businessmen, and those who have social and political relations abroad. Together with this is the need for sensitivity and the understanding of foreign peoples as *people*—an attitude of mutual respect for their feelings, ideas and culture.

The elementary school program should integrate into its curriculum educational experiences for children that will contribute to an improvement in international understanding. Possibly a sensitivity to the many languages of the community in addition to direct contact with people of varying backgrounds in the community will develop in children a greater appreciation of these different backgrounds and an understanding that all humans have the same basic needs.

The belief is held that the trend to teach foreign languages in the elementary school which has grown so rapidly since Earl McGrath's St. Louis speech in 1952 and the Washington Foreign Language Conference in January 1953 should be examined critically. This suggestion for critical observation of the program is not made by the generalist in education alone. At the Second Work Conference of the Modern Language Association, the following statement was made:

> The majority of the participants in the second conference felt that the document formulated by the first conference, "Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools: Some Questions and Answers," was subjective, too sweeping in its claims, and lacking in documentation. The child-centered, integrated curriculum, in their view, makes it difficult to speak of allotment of specific amounts of time to foreign language study, and the current trend away from departmentalization is opposed to the use of foreign language specialists. Two of the participants felt that the principle of curriculum development should determine the answers to almost all the questions. A basic principle of curriculum development, in their view, is "that children must be dealt with as individuals. Study appropriate for one child may not be appropriate or suitable or needed for another. The learning experiences, activities, and opportunities in any grade should be developed on the basis of the needs of the children and of the community situation." [6]

[6] Modern Language Association of America. *Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools: Some Questions and Answers.* New York: Second Work Conference, the Association, June 1954. 6 Washington Square North, New York 3, N. Y.

Proposed programs of foreign language teaching in the elementary school should be scrutinized carefully as to purpose, method and content in the teaching of the foreign language in the elementary grades.

Much more rigorous research needs to be done with those programs which have been established for some time. Due to the paucity of reliable research and lack of agreement on the validity of the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary grades, there is great need for criteria which will be useful in evaluating programs and in making judgments as to the desirability of further ventures in this area.

Criteria for Examining Current Proposals and Programs

Several basic curriculum principles or criteria may be cited as generally acceptable as measures of the validity of curriculum development in the elementary school. These principles are applicable not only to the teaching of foreign languages but to an evaluation of other areas of learning. In order to determine the feasibility of teaching a particular foreign language we might apply the following criteria:

1. Does the program have well thought out and defensible purposes?
2. Are the purposes of the program cooperatively developed?
3. Does the program provide for the mental health of children and teachers?
4. Is the program based upon sound teaching-learning principles?
5. Are the materials conducive to sound learning?
6. Is the evaluation broad and comprehensive?

A study of foreign language teaching in the light of these criteria should serve to determine whether a proposed foreign language program is in keeping with the principles underlying modern elementary education. They should help, therefore, to determine whether or not expenditure of money for such a program is justifiable. Consideration of each of the foregoing criteria with application to some current practices follows.

1. Does the program have well thought out and defensible purposes?

The validity of a language program cannot be substantiated by criteria concerned only with *methods,* but must be considered primarily in the light of justifiable *purposes.* Teaching practices, use of devices and classroom activities which elicit children's interest and enjoyment, are not in themselves adequate to justify foreign language instruction. The methods and language experiences, irrespective of their effective-

ness in serving to interest children, should contribute to the attainment of sound objectives, to basic social goals or purposes, and to the fulfillment of children's basic emotional and social needs. In this examination some of the outstanding present purposes proposed by many language and curriculum specialists are discussed in view of the foregoing criteria. In general two purposes are discussed—those related to improvement of human relations and of international understanding. These purposes are emphasized especially by curriculum specialists, while other purposes are considered more important by linguists and many special language teachers.

a. *Improvement of human relations in the local community,* is a goal frequently used to justify foreign language teaching. Language programs such as those in San Diego, Los Angeles, El Paso and Carlsbad, which were established to meet social needs, stress this goal of improving human relations. The Los Angeles program grew out of a concern of social workers and educators to improve the social relations between the two ethnic groups in their population. This social motive was largely responsible for the establishment of other programs in the Southwest. Some of these systems report that since Spanish is being taught in elementary schools, the social relations between the two groups have greatly improved. Many Mexican children feel a greater sense of status, adequacy and sense of belonging when others, including the teacher, make an effort to learn their language. The language program in the upper grades in these cities is frequently related to a study of Mexico and South America. In communities in Louisiana and along the Canadian border, where there are many French speaking people, French is taught in the schools.

Under the guidance of a socially sensitive teacher, language studied in relation to people in the community helps children better understand individuals in other countries. They learn that other people are like ourselves, with the same basic needs and some of the same problems, which may be solved differently in different cultures. Such a language program, which contributes to an understanding of people, which meets social needs in a particular community and which helps to develop democratic social attitudes early in a child's experience, is a significant part of the school curriculum. In some cases such a program justifies the expenditure in the school budget for language specialists, teachers and supervisors.

In other areas, where language programs have been established, there is no apparent need for children to develop ability to speak a foreign language which they seldom hear and have little or no occasion

to speak in their community, out-of-school life. However, either or both French and Spanish are taught in some communities of the East such as Brighton, New York; Fairfield, Connecticut; Wantagh, New York; and Jamestown, New York, where there is little opportunity for contact with people in the community who speak either language. This situation is likewise true in many private schools throughout the United States. The teaching of foreign languages in these communities needs to be quite different from that in communities where children have a constant need for communicating with people of foreign background. Thus in some schools the purposes of the program are directly related to actual needs of children while other systems start programs for other purposes. In some communities the real reasons for the foreign language instruction may be not only the admirable purposes listed in the course of study, but may be due to community pressure, a superintendent's interest, or the public relations appeal of such instruction.

In some communities where there is no real social purpose for teaching a foreign language, the selection of the particular language is usually made on the basis of:

(1) The availability of teachers who can teach a foreign language—the one spoken by the greatest number of teachers is frequently selected

(2) The worldwide use of the language—such as French or Spanish

(3) The language spoken most predominantly in the community

(4) Spanish is often chosen because it seems to some administrators or board members that this language is less complicated and easier for children to learn

(5) The wishes of parents as determined by questionnaires

(6) The availability for elementary language teaching of high school teachers whose programs or class loads were not filled in the high school

(7) The availability of interested persons in language departments in local or nearby colleges to serve as elementary foreign language teachers for a number of periods a day. (This would include graduate students majoring in the foreign language.)

(8) The feeling that a particular language such as French has cultural value. French is desired by a large percentage of persons in many wealthy communities who sometimes send their children to private schools in order that they might learn the language, which they assume will be valuable for them in college or when traveling abroad

(9) Possible contact with foreign visitors to the community, especially in convention cities, which depend upon visitors for business.

The selection of one certain foreign language to be taught is particularly difficult when several are spoken in the community. Some language specialists hold that the particular language selected is not too important, on the grounds that there are inherent values in learning any foreign language, and that language experience of any kind will prove of value at a later date in learning other languages.

b. *The improvement of international relations* is given as an important reason for teaching foreign languages in the elementary school. Toward facilitating the accomplishment of this goal, considerable financial support has been made available by the Ford Foundation to the Modern Language Association of America. This goal is also stressed in current literature and in many of the systems visited in observing foreign language programs. It seems questionable that the mere ability to pronounce and memorize words and phrases, i.e., the development of language skills, can improve human relations or international understanding, unless there is ample opportunity through personal relations or vicarious experiences with peoples of other lands to develop a sensitivity and respect for them—for their differing backgrounds, customs and culture. In too few programs visited was the teaching related as much as it might have been to the foreign peoples in the local community nor were the valuable community human resources used extensively in the teaching of the language.

On the whole, the social understandings tend to be secondary and in some cases ignored by many foreign language teachers. A fundamental difference in viewpoint between the language specialist and the curriculum specialists was expressed in Dr. Andersson's statement at the Fairfield, Connecticut, meeting in which he said, "Skill in the language comes before understanding." In general, the linguist tends to emphasize skill in the language as being most important, while the social scientist stresses understanding of other peoples in viewing the role of foreign language teaching. The latter approach recognizes the significance of this learning in areas where it serves a community need, but many question the value of a language skill program for *all* children in communities where there is only a small foreign speaking population. In such situations, the teaching cannot serve a continuing functional purpose in children's present living. Frequently the initiation or extension of a language program occurs because of publicity and parent approval even though the children have no real use for the learning. Teachers who are already trying to relate many important new areas in their teaching should not be expected also to include language instruction unless the time and effort which they and the children

devote to studying a foreign language can be of actual significance.

Thus, we might ask ourselves again, concerning the use of any interesting foreign language activity or device: What is its purpose? Why dramatize the "Three Bears" in Spanish or French in a community where 95 percent or more of the children have little or no opportunity in their daily living to communicate with a person of Spanish or of French background? To be sure children might enjoy memorizing the foreign vocabulary in order to put on the play. This dramatization, too, may be pleasing to the parents, but in general such language learning has little immediate social value. Children would derive similar enjoyment and have experience in creative self-expression were they to do this same dramatization in English.

c. *The "cultural" development of the individual* is given by some linguists and teachers as a purpose for elementary school foreign language teaching. The ability to converse in and read another language has often been conceived as a mark of culture on the part of an individual. Too frequently the proponents of teaching languages for this end have been little concerned with linguistic achievement for the purpose of communicating with non-English speaking people in our own country such as the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Italians, Germans, or the Swedish people in our cities. Instead of being brought closer to people, the person who is supposed to become "cultured" through foreign language study often develops as an individual apart from his fellow man. Usually "cultural" learning of French, Spanish or other languages becomes largely book learning with emphasis on acquisition of a perfect pronunciation. The achievement of an accurate pronunciation is desirable and important. The method by which it is acquired, however, should not restrict communication with individuals who have different expressions, accents or dialects. Throughout the world the peoples who speak some of the most common of the 2000 or more languages have various pronunciations and dialects. An American's English speech differs from that of an Englishman, the New Zealander's from the Australian's and/or the Englishman's. Nevertheless, citizens of the British Commonwealth of Nations can communicate adequately with one another even though the speech of each is not cultured Oxford English.

In contrast to the foregoing concept of culture, we may also think of the cultured individual as a person who is able to project himself in time and space, who is able to see himself in the perspective of time and in the totality of the universe. This individual has empathy with and consideration for other peoples. He has deep, active and successful

roots in his own culture, and has examined carefully the strengths and weaknesses of his own culture. At the same time he can discuss other cultures without name-calling, stereotyping and extreme categorization. He is one who does not wish to make over other peoples and cultures in his image. He is a world citizen, one who finds it natural and satisfying to live as a member of the "family of man" because he has experienced the common bonds that unite people of varying cultures. The development of such a world-minded person is certainly among the major objectives of education. Any foreign language program in the elementary schools should be more concerned with the development of such purposes than with the acquisition of linguistic ability and correct pronunciation as a major goal. It is highly dubious that stress upon skill alone in foreign language communication will achieve these purposes of world-mindedness.

d. *Preparation for high school and for meeting adult needs* is a purpose important to many teachers of foreign languages, particularly those at the secondary level, many of whom are also teaching in elementary school programs. In certain instances where preparation for the high school program is emphasized, children who have had six years of instruction in French before entering high school are placed in the second year French class or, in other words, six years of instruction set the child ahead only one year. This seems a rather inefficient use of a child's time in school yet this is not an uncommon procedure.

Some of the concern for developing a program of foreign languages in the elementary grades has grown because of the tremendous decrease in enrollment in foreign language classes during the past years, and because of the large number of dropouts after the second year of high school foreign language study. High school teachers are cognizant of this situation and are attempting to improve their programs in the following ways:

(1) A greater extension of the aural-oral approach

(2) Decreased emphasis upon grammatical construction

(3) The development of a more practical vocabulary

(4) More teaching about the country whose language is being studied

(5) A more thorough application of psychological methods of learning as illustrated by the U. S. Army and by the Institute of Languages and Linguistics of Georgetown University, in Washington, D. C.

(6) A more creative use of audio-visual aids

(7) The relationship of the program to the life needs of adolescents

(8) Greater use of intrinsic motivation.

It may be that improvement of the high school program may lessen to some extent the motivation for planning elementary programs as a preparation for high school language study.

The teaching of foreign languages as preparation for adult life may be highly questionable. Which foreign language should we teach? Realistically, at the present moment in history, perhaps it should be Russian or Chinese, or one of the major languages of India, for apparently it is these countries with which we need most to communicate for purposes of world peace and security. Yet, the obvious conclusion is that we do not know in our ever-changing world which of the more than 2000 languages our children today will need to know in 1975. And, since it is quite apparent that adults who do not use the foreign language skills they learned in high school quickly lose them, it is extremely doubtful that children will retain this skill unless it functions in their daily living in a meaningful, purposeful fashion. The language to be chosen, it seems, should be one of those used for communication in the immediate community in which the child lives. Children must be helped to live adequately and fully each day, to be intelligent in solving problems and flexible and adjustable to changing circumstances. We cannot prepare them specifically for an unknown future.

e. *Enrichment for children with high I.Q.'s* is another justification given by some for introduction of language programs.

It might be well to indicate that there is not adequate research to justify foreign language instruction for only the children with high academic intelligence. In fact, from the statements of some supervisors of long established programs children who have been slow learners in other areas of the curriculum sometimes are outstanding in learning to speak a foreign language. In the experience of the authors even high school students who may have trouble with English may do well with a foreign language. A question might be raised regarding the inconsistencies in restricting foreign language study to only a select group and the democratic purpose to which the same schools subscribe, namely, that of improving human relations.

Thus, in determining whether the goals of a program are defensible we might also ask: Do the purposes emphasize the utilization of language in relation to people of differing backgrounds, viewpoints, speech and customs? Does the program contribute to the development of better understanding among persons of differing cultural and language background in the classrooms and in the community environments?

Do the practices actually promote international understanding?
Are the purposes consistent with other goals of the school system?

2. *Are the purposes of the program cooperatively developed?*

This is another basic criterion to apply to a foreign language program. Many of the present programs and courses of study have been developed primarily by language specialists, most of whom are former high school teachers, or by administrators. Language specialists, curriculum consultants, and administrators should work together in formulating basic purposes and language methods in view of the school's educational philosophy. If a program is needed in a community it should be worked out cooperatively in the light of the whole elementary curriculum. It should be consistent with the available research in child growth and curriculum development. Foreign language teaching would then become an integral part of the child's classroom learnings.

To achieve this unanimity, curriculum specialists, because of their background, have a responsibility to cooperate with language supervisors. Together they can afford the necessary professional leadership (a) to school staffs, including members of any after school recreation or adult education programs, and (b) to the community in developing an educationally sound program which would provide in a general way for meeting the needs of all the children in the school, and provide also for the particular interest, abilities and needs of individual children in the school system. To analyze the effectiveness of programs with reference to this principle of modern curriculum development the following questions might be raised:

Have the classroom teachers who are involved in the program been participants in planning it?

Have interested parents cooperated with the administration and staff in studying the needs, problems and advisability of having a foreign language program in the elementary school?

Has provision been made for utilizing some of the valuable language resources and cultural experiences available among the parents and people in the community?

3. *Does the program provide for the mental health of children and teachers?*

Concern for mental health of both teachers and children is indicated when ample time is allowed for the specialists to know the teacher, the children, and the classroom program. It is highly doubtful if this can be done when the specialist meets 3500 children in 100 classes each week, as was found to be the case in one city visited. Effective teaching

is to a large degree a matter of a one-to-one relationship of a teacher to a pupil. The teacher needs to know the children and they in turn need to know him. Only as we approach this relationship can the teaching be related to the needs of children and thereby be such that security, good mental health, and effective learning are provided.

Provision is made for the teachers' mental health when their participation in the foreign language program is on a voluntary basis. Teachers should not be pressured into foreign language teaching when they feel inadequate or are poorly prepared. There should be wide spread participation by the teachers in determining whether such a program should be put into effect, and if it is deemed desirable they should determine its relationship to the total program.

One of the fears of teachers in the introduction of foreign languages in the elementary school is that because of the time required for such instruction it may impair the basic program. So, consideration must be given to the relative values of teaching a foreign language. We must not delude ourselves that such teaching does not take time. The question arises as to what is most important to teach in the grades. What areas shall we decrease or eliminate in the already crowded elementary school day so that we might teach more of the foreign language?

The use of organizational or administrative techniques such as instituting a partial platoon plan in order to teach one or two selected languages for 15-minute daily periods to all classes is a highly questionable practice. There is little opportunity for such fragmented learning to become part of the whole. It is inconsistent with the concept of integrated education. This plan, in which teachers with a speaking knowledge of the foreign languages exchange classes with others in the same school is important to the language specialist in achieving continuity of language skills throughout the entire elementary school. But continuity, as interpreted by this plan, is achieved at the expense of the whole elementary program. In order to achieve continuity in the program it is also unwise to use organizational techniques which depart from the basic philosophy of a school system. It might also be pointed out that, just as in any learning, some children will acquire language proficiency easily while others will have difficulty. If these individual differences are ignored and if the program is not adjusted to the students' differing linguistic abilities, some children will develop feelings of inadequacy. It is doubtful whether language proficiency for some pupils justifies the cost in loss of self-respect and feelings of adequacy and confidence on the part of others which is frequently a result of isolated language instruction, unrelated to the whole classroom

program or to the needs of children. Grouping of children in terms of their emotional and social needs might be more significant for a class or for individual children's total growth than grouping for ease of language instruction or the maintenance of continuity in the learning of languages.

In determining the contribution of the program to mental health the following questions might well be probed:

To what extent does a program contribute to a sense of security and adequacy on the part of teachers and children?

Is the program conducive to good classroom and teacher morale?

Does the special teacher know the children and also the classroom teacher's problems?

Is there enough time available for planning together in terms of classroom experiences?

Does the program exert pressure on children and/or teachers?

Is the program an integrated one?

4. Is the program based upon sound teaching-learning principles?

Primary among these principles is the principle of readiness. When is a child ready for a foreign language?

Several conferees at the meeting of the Modern Language Association of America in 1956 held that *ideally* the best time to start the teaching of foreign languages is at birth. But since the school has no control over these early years, age four was selected as the recommended time to begin a second language, and certainly not later than age eight. Their reasoning is based upon statements by Dr. Penfield of the Montreal Neurological Institute, and by Dr. Ilg of Yale. These specialists both speak of the receptiveness of children in these early years, and of the full capacity for learning at that time. Dr. Penfield states that several languages can be learned simultaneously at this time. Yet, among neurologists and psychiatrists there is disagreement as to the validity of these claims. Alice Miel discusses the scepticism concerning the claims in *Teachers College Record* of December 1954.[7]

The statement based on the research of linguists and neurologists reflects a point of view which conceives of readiness in terms of physical development with reference to brain structure and vocal flexibility. It implies a mechanistic approach to learning. Reading experts have found that not all children of six and a half, even though their eye muscles are developed at that age, are ready for a primary reading experience, and that other psychological factors are also a part

[7] ALICE M. MIEL. "Does Foreign Language Belong in the Elementary School?" *Teachers College Record* 56:139-48; December 1954.

of readiness. So the concept of readiness in any area, including foreign language learning, involves not only the individual's physical development, but the emotional and social as well.

In contrast Walter Kaulfers of the University of Illinois, a curriculum specialist in the language arts, reports Thorndike's conclusion that adults of age 35 or over learned twice as much language in half the time required by young people age 9 to 18. It seems to Dr. Kaulfers that although young children are less self-conscious, adults have advantages which offset those of children. Many of the problems in the teaching of foreign languages in the secondary school may be attributed in some measure to methods of teaching which are contrary to basic principles of growth in linguistic development.

It is through meaningful classroom and living experiences that children derive their purposes, develop interests, and express the readiness and desire at a given moment to learn. Children are ready and learn to speak any language when they are driven by needs of hunger, physical comfort, the desire for expression and social integration. The vocabulary is thus self-directed, and is selected to serve an individual's wants. Language is a means of fulfilling these wants. These are the motivations which create for the learner the readiness to explore a new area—a new experience of learning. Unless a child has such readiness for learning, i.e., the need to satisfy his wants, to answer his problems, his acquisition of information tends to be largely in terms of extrinsic motivations, and learning for learning's sake. A child's language experience, like his reading experience, should grow out of life needs.

These same life purposes do not exist in a classroom (even though the aural-oral method is used) where the same basic vocabulary is selected in advance by the teacher for all children on each grade level, presented with drill and various interesting devices so that the children memorize the phrases in many cases apart from any social situation involving life purposes. It is generally agreed that all children are not ready emotionally, socially or intellectually at the same time for the same learning. In teaching foreign languages these individual differences need to be taken into consideration. In areas where only certain children have a use for the language, plans may be devised by some school systems to meet such needs in the out-of-school experiences as afforded in adult education, recreation, or other extended programs. Within the classroom the approach to the understanding of foreign languages should be such that the learnings are related to children's abilities, interests, purposes and life experiences.

In further determining readiness, it might be mentioned that al-

though the child may easily learn a foreign language in the elementary grades, it is also true that he learns many things easily at this age. Age, itself, is not an adequate reason for teaching a foreign language. Helen Hay Heyl, in collaboration with other members of the Division of Elementary Education of the State Department of Education of New York State, has commented:

> The belief that young children can learn to speak a foreign language more easily than older children, if teaching is paced slowly, is not in itself a sufficient reason to teach the foreign language at an early age. A young child learning his native language is, at the same time, creating his instrument for thought. The higher the requirements to be met by this child in life, the more thorough his grasp of the mother tongue should be—and the more time he should be given for learning it. Some educators believe that since the mother tongue constitutes the instrument for thought which a child has to use all his life, this tool should be developed to a fairly high degree of efficiency before he is encouraged to start a second language. Many think that instruction in a foreign language, therefore, should not begin before the age of 12 years.[8]

Even though a child can memorize a foreign vocabulary and acquire a perfect pronunciation, we must not thereby assume that the learning will become functional. The principle of "use or lose" becomes applicable here. Even the high school student who does not use his second or third language quite quickly forgets it. How then can we expect a child to retain it that much longer? Actual experience of educators who have had foreign children in their school reveals that in a few months of living in an environment among friends who speak only a language foreign to them and with the need for communication learn to speak it much more quickly and retain this ability longer than they would from periodic lessons taught by an expert for a few minutes a day with little or no social purpose.

Nicholas Hobbs at the first National Conference on the Role of Foreign Languages in American Schools analyzed reasons for including foreign languages in the school curriculum. He pointed out that the choice of age for beginning instruction should be determined by the objectives sought; that there is no one best age for all individuals and all purposes. Each age has its advantages and its limitations. The childhood years, according to Hobbs, have an advantage in linguistic flexibility and in ease of learning directly the concepts of a second language. The late high school and college years have an advantage in that they are the years of greatest learning ability in general. The

[8] Helen Hay Heyl. *Letters to Supervisors*, Series 8:5. Albany, N. Y.: University of the State of New York, January 1955.

adult years have an advantage in that motivation often is brought to a point where the individual is interested in mobilizing all his energies and abilities to learn the second language.

If maximum efficiency is sought, Hobbs continues, that is, if there is desire for the greatest amount of learning in the shortest period of time and we are concerned with effectiveness of communication rather than elegance of expression or accent, then language instruction should probably be given to adults when they keenly feel the need of the second language.

If we are interested in the cultural values of language, with ability to read the literature of another language, Hobbs suggests that the traditional placing of foreign language in high schools and colleges is indicated.

However, if we are interested in training articulate leaders who can sit down with people of other nations as friends and solve common problems, then, Hobbs believes, a new pattern of language instruction must be found. If better communication among men is our goal, then we must start in the elementary grades and continue all through the years of schooling and into the years of adult responsibility.[9]

There is very little agreement as to the age at which a child is ready for foreign languages, or whether foreign languages should be for all children or what the approaches to the teaching of the foreign languages should be in the various situations. Psychologically, we might well determine readiness for a language on the basis of the needs to communicate and to get along with others of foreign backgrounds in our immediate surroundings, in addition to the social-emotional development of the children.

Out of our personal, school, social and community relationships with foreign peoples should come the mutual need, desire and willingness to learn another's language. To the extent that discrimination and prejudice toward foreign peoples in our communities are supplanted by respect for differences in cultures so that there is free social interaction among all as neighbors, gradually and slowly, there probably would develop a real purpose and need for children in every community in our country to learn the foreign languages spoken in that community. As children begin to hear various languages spoken in their home, in their neighborhoods, and among their friends, the instruction would have meaning for them. Only when there is real purpose for children should language become a part of the elementary curriculum.

In relation to this criterion pertaining to principles of teaching and

[9] ALICE MIEL. *op. cit.*, p. 147.

learning, educators contemplating the initiation or effectiveness of a program might consider the following questions.

Is the individual child ready for a foreign language?

Is the teaching of foreign languages related to the real life experiences and present needs of the children in the particular community?

Is the program an integral part of the entire curriculum?

Is there pupil-teacher planning?

Does the learning proceed from those areas in which children feel the need to make a judgment, a decision, or to render an opinion?

Does the program make sense to the children?

Does the program proceed along developmental lines?

5. Are the materials conducive to sound learning?

Reference has been made earlier to the excellent use of materials in many foreign language teaching situations. A wide variety of both audio and visual materials are used. Too often, however, there is little provision for individual differences. The same materials are frequently used with all pupils at the same time. As new materials such as television and other electronic devices are developed there is the tendency to accept them somewhat unquestioningly. Such materials should fit into a total program to serve a particular need and at an appropriate time. They should be used only when no other method or technique can be as effective. They should be viewed with much scepticism if they tend to destroy the interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the child, for teaching is largely a matter of high quality interpersonal relationships of one individual with another. Any audio-visual or other device that tends to make a program more rigid should be scrutinized carefully. For example, in instances where a total school program is disrupted for a broadcast or the televising of a particular event, those responsible for such a program should thoroughly examine the objectives and purposes of their school and of modern education in general. Any device which tends to fix or to "freeze" a program is subject to a reasonable scepticism. A modern school program requires flexibility. Flexibility can be maintained only as the individual teacher in his room is free to adjust that program to the particular needs of his pupils.

One might ask with reference to this foregoing criterion:

Are many different kinds of teaching aids used without the loss of interpersonal relationships?

Are appropriate provisions made for individual differences?

6. Is the evaluation broad and comprehensive?

The evaluation of foreign language programs, even in such cities as

Cleveland, is too frequently restricted to the development of achievement in the skills. Even though the purposes stated are for culture, for human relations, for international understanding, little or nothing is usually done to evaluate in terms of these broad goals of the program. There has been no adequate action research to substantiate the objectives attributed to the program. We cannot move forward in the foreign language program until we strive for more comprehensive evaluation of the effects of the program not only on the individual's ability to achieve, but also on his emotional and social growth, as well as his growth in understanding of others. It is not that we do not know how to evaluate. Most books on testing and measurement are quite explicit in their helps in this direction. If we are to justify the foreign language program we must utilize these aids to secure evidence of the value of this program, and measure the extent to which the goals of the program are being realized.

The value of all language activities should be measured by the extent to which socially significant and educationally sound goals are accomplished through them, as evidenced by evaluative data in the form of anecdotal records of the growth and changes in the individual's behavior and attitudes. We need evidence in order to validate the accomplishment of such worth-while behavior outcomes as the improvement of human and international relations. We should not merely assume that these goals are being accomplished by children who try to imitate words of a foreign language.

The results of present and future experimental programs should be evaluated through the use of sound evaluative methods. Such research is essential to justify the widespread acceptance of elementary foreign language teaching. Likewise some investigations might well consider the use of control groups to determine the possibility of achieving the stated objectives or goals more effectively through social experiences rather than by language instruction. It might be mentioned that such research studies concerned with evaluating results of the elementary foreign language instruction in terms of the stated goals or purposes were not evident in the programs visited.

Cleveland has done research relative to the effect of elementary teaching on the high school foreign language program. It might be interesting to know from cities which have had programs for a long time, such as Cleveland, with approximately 20,000 graduates of their six year elementary French program, (a) the number of graduates who because of their linguistic ability have taken positions abroad, or (b) their attitudes relative to international affairs, or (c) their communication with and the degree to which they relate to foreign peoples in their

communities. It would be valuable likewise to know whether the knowledge of French made some of these graduates as tourists more understanding and sensitive to the Europeans they met. Such research projects might require years to complete, but their findings would be important to school systems in consideration of plans for instituting an elementary program. Educators should know through research to what extent their foreign language instruction achieves the goals of their programs.

With reference to this last criterion pertaining to evaluation we might ask regarding foreign language instruction in elementary schools:

Is there evaluative research which measures not only the academic growth but also the emotional, physical and social growth of children?

Is there opportunity for pupil self-evaluation?

Is the evaluation consistent with the basic principles or objectives set up cooperatively by all concerned?

Is the accomplishment of goals assumed without validating these conclusions with evidence gained from adequate and comprehensive research?

In keeping with some of the foregoing discussion—relative to criteria —any teacher might evaluate his own program with these points in mind:

1. The foreign language learning should be an integral part of the curriculum and not isolated from it. The language experiences which children meet should be those which can be woven into the matrix of their daily living. Children must be able to use these learnings continually throughout the day, and the learnings must be functional in their living.

2. The learning should meet the needs of the children at their particular developmental level. Such learning is not preparation for the future. The best preparation for the future is adequate living today. Children in the elementary school need to learn how to get along with other people as well as how to get along with themselves.

3. The learning should be mainly from the whole to the part. Individual words and phrases should be initially learned in connection with larger expressions of needs of children rather than as entities in themselves.

4. The learning should be such that children are able to participate actively in planning and in carrying it out.

5. The learning should proceed from those areas in which children feel a need to make a judgment, a decision, or to render an opinion.

6. The learning should be such that it leads to greater understanding and empathy with other people.

7. The learning should not put pressure on children or teachers.

8. The learning should provide for cooperation of many kinds.

9. There should be evaluation of all phases of the program in terms of goals consistent with social and individual needs.

Examining Some Organizational Issues

In this section four organizational issues will be discussed. These issues are of great importance to many persons involved in or contemplating the addition of foreign language to the elementary curriculum.

1. When should foreign language teaching be started?

A growing number of school systems start foreign language teaching in kindergarten or in first grade. Some justify the introduction of foreign language at this early age in the light of statements by Theodore Andersson and others, and by the research of linguists and neurologists which indicates that children learn foreign languages best when they are very young. Recently there have been some statements and research refuting this point of view. Many language programs start in the third grade after the children have acquired skills in primary reading in order that there will be no added difficulty during the earlier years of a child's adjustment to school. The decision to begin the language program at third grade or at a higher level in some school systems is sometimes due to expediency, for it is frequently possible to provide teachers or specialists for this level and in some cases also for fourth grade, but not enough teachers to extend the program to lower grades. Some teachers believe that children tend to remember better in third grade than they do at a younger age.

In other places the program is instituted first in the upper grades, i.e., fifth and sixth. One reason for this upper grade placement might be the fact that often the only language teachers available are high school teachers who possibly can adjust more easily to children in the upper grades than they can to primary children. Another reason might be the fact that the effect of the experimental elementary foreign language teaching on the high school language program can be more quickly ascertained since the fifth and sixth graders involved would enter high school in only two years. In many such places where the program has started in upper grades it tends to be extended to a preceding grade or grades each year as teachers are available. Thus in some schools the programs are being extended gradually upward

in the grades from the first, as in El Paso and Carlsbad; and in others downward to the primary grades, as in Fairfield and Brighton.

Some schools have initiated the entire program at once in all grades, but this plan is used chiefly when workshops and manuals are available for in-service education of teachers. An example of such a plan is in the Los Angeles schools where a program was started in all grades by the direction of the superintendent of schools with workshops provided for in-service preparation. Although participation at these workshops contributes to teachers' receiving added increments on the salary schedule, not all of them are able or interested in attending such meetings. Thus in Los Angeles even though the excellent manual and the recordings and teacher materials have been available for a program in all grades, teaching of Spanish is not practiced in every classroom. The Cleveland plan includes all grades, first through sixth, but foreign language instruction there is not available to all elementary children; it is restricted to children of high I.Q. Thus only a small proportion of the entire school population receives this foreign language instruction.

2. *How can continuity in foreign language teaching be achieved?*

When concern is felt for the development of language skills, continuity in the program becomes very important. In the visits to the various schools it was observed that one effort toward continuity of this kind was the employment and use of special teachers to teach the language. Such situations were observed in Atlantic City, Brighton, Cleveland, Fairfield, and Lake Forest. Generally, these special teachers present language to a class for periods of 15 or 20 minutes daily, or three times a week. One exception to this is Cleveland where the time devoted to French was one-half hour to 40 minutes daily. In a majority of cases, the special teachers traveled to the classrooms in the various schools, except in Cleveland where the classes go to rooms designated for French instruction.

When the specialist is used in this manner the language teaching is frequently unrelated to the classroom experiences of the children. It may be observed that the classroom teachers frequently have no direct responsibility for the program. Often the classroom teacher leaves the room during the language period. Furthermore, because of the language deficiencies of most of the classroom teachers the actual experience which the children have with the language tends to be limited to the relatively short period of time each week given by the specialists.

In addition, the "specialist" programs tend to be largely teacher-directed and subject centered rather than pupil-teacher-planned and experience centered. This situation often occurs because time is not

available for the specialist to plan the work with the individual teacher in terms of the interests, needs and experiences of the particular class. One such specialist reported teaching over 100 classes per week for 15 or 20 minutes in a number of different schools. Thus, this individual had contact with about 3500 children. Other specialists teach in both the elementary and high schools or in nearby colleges. Obviously, there is little opportunity for them to know the children, or to plan and teach in the light of knowledge of individual children or of class interests and experiences.

Continuity in the program is also attempted in situations where the specialist tries to teach the language with the assistance of the classroom teacher. The teacher endeavors to learn the language by observing and listening to the special language teacher. A few interested teachers in these systems are making the effort to learn the language through adult education courses and other available opportunities. This lends itself to a somewhat more integrated approach to the teaching process, although it was observed that these programs suffer many of the shortcomings of that conducted by the specialist alone.

Another attempt to provide continuity is found in those school systems which have workshops in the teaching of foreign languages. In such places as San Diego, Jamestown, and Carlsbad, special teachers or supervisors not only teach children, but also carry on an in-service training program for teachers. At these workshops the teachers usually learn the language through the aural-oral method. Through grade level committees, they also frequently prepare cooperatively some unit materials for each elementary grade level. Thus the teachers are active participants in building their course of study through their in-service education program. At the initial stage, a special teacher or supervisor teaches the language classes and illustrates with children the techniques discussed in the workshop. As the teachers grow in competence and adequacy they take over their own foreign language teaching, using the materials which they have developed in their workshops. In general, it might be said that in the workshop programs the special teacher's or supervisor's responsibilities decrease as the number of classroom teachers become prepared and as their interest in teaching their own language classes increases. In Los Angeles, where the program has been in operation over 10 years, there are no special teachers but workshops continue to be conducted for the benefit of interested teachers who care to utilize the materials which have been developed by others.

The extent and quality of the foreign language program in the cities with a workshop plan depend largely upon the interest, efforts and

language abilities of the classroom teachers, whose attendance at workshops is generally voluntary. Under this plan when a teacher is uninterested in teaching a foreign language or has a language disability the special teachers try to arrange their schedules to teach such groups. When this is impossible, a consistent development of the language skills is lost since the next teacher does not continue the program. Too frequently, the next teacher the child will have knows, from his participation in the workshop program, only the same vocabulary, phrases and activities as did the teacher of the previous grade. Thus, the child's experiences in language may not be deepened or extended to any marked degree during his next school year.

A plan with neither the specialist teaching the classes nor a workshop is found where a classroom teacher, competent in speaking a foreign language, makes foreign language instruction a part of his teaching. Such situations have been observed when a teacher makes language instruction an integral part of his classroom work, related to art, music and social science. The language experiences of his class thus can become a part of the living of the entire school. For example, in one school, at a "French table" during lunch time only French is spoken by any child, teacher or parent in the school who cares to participate. Through this means a sensitivity to a foreign language, as well as a rich experience in a real situation for communication, is provided not only for this class, but is also shared by others in the school and community. Although this is a desirable practice, it may not be justifiable if we accept the criterion that the program should grow out of real needs of children rather than emerging from contrived situations.

3. What methods and techniques are effective in foreign language teaching?

The validity of any teaching technique should depend upon the need it serves and the purposes it achieves. The methods and techniques observed in presenting a foreign language tend in most instances to elicit children's interest, but this is achieved most frequently through the use of manipulated artificial situations. The aural-oral method, i.e., only hearing and speaking the language, is generally practiced. In fact, in current programs children seldom, if ever, hear the language teacher speak English. In most cases children have two or three years of this aural-oral teaching before they are introduced to reading the foreign words. This principle of developing facility in oral expression as a readiness for reading the foreign material is consistent with modern practice in primary reading. After the children have considerable

experience in speaking and reading, the writing of the foreign language is then introduced and encouraged through stimulating experiences and activities. The methods observed in most elementary foreign language teaching today are different from the former grammatical-analytical approach, and much more consistent with accepted current curriculum trends. Such procedures apply principles basic to language development—first one hears the language, then he speaks it, following this he reads it, and later on he writes the language. However effective the methods, they do not justify the existence of any program. Method and purpose, practice and goals must always be interrelated so that they will contribute to the fulfillment of children's basic social and emotional needs.

There is a similarity of activities and materials in many classrooms throughout the country. For example the language teacher most generally knocks at the door creating a situation through which children learn the conversation pertaining to greetings. This in some cases becomes a pattern and is repeated needlessly long after it has any significance for the children. The vocabulary, taught largely through the use of pictures, is practically the same in most communities. This vocabulary consists of words and phrases pertaining to pets, the home, things in the room, names, time, nature, colors, arithmetic and social studies. The vocabulary tends to be static partly due to the fact that frequently the teacher knows only these words. There is undue emphasis on memory and oral repetition—learning by rote this set vocabulary with the use of concrete materials, pictures, articles and other media to stimulate interest and convey meaning. There does not seem to be any emphasis upon the building of an individual class vocabulary or conversation related to the unique and actual daily classroom interests or experiences of the children such as their grocery trip, a new turtle, the class bakery, their garden. Language should grow out of the spontaneous expressions of children.

In large classes of 35 or 40, the children usually answer the teacher's many questions in chorus. With this procedure, which is apparently deemed necessary so that all children have an opportunity to vocalize it is difficult to determine whether individual children are pronouncing words correctly. There is little opportunity, because of class size and limitation of time and the subject-centered orientation in the teaching to make adequate provision for individual response or conversation. This might be more easily possible in a class organization which provides for small group work based on children's interests and abilities. In Lake Forest and Cleveland most language groups include only half of the regular class, from 14 to 16 children. Here, with ample oppor

tunity for each to respond individually, the children develop a greater fluency and more accurate pronunciation of the foreign language taught.

A lack of self-consciousness, an interest and enjoyment of the program are generally evident on the part of the children in such situations. On the whole they seem to derive considerable pleasure from repeating the many unusual sounds, but in many instances the children do not seem to regard the learning primarily as a means of communication. It might be well to note in this regard that new strange meaningless sounds seem to appeal generally to many elementary children, as evidenced from their frequent fascination with "Pig Latin" and the "secret" languages which children sometimes create. In many situations the teacher's enthusiasm and the use of concrete materials contribute to the children's undivided attention. Frequently when they participate in using foreign vocabulary in dramatics, puppetry activities, singing foreign songs, and in the jingles and games such as "Simon Says," the interest may be due to the fact that these language activities provide a diversion from the regular class work. It might be questioned whether children will sustain a real interest in a foreign language over a long period of time especially if they begin to see little or no use for it in their out of school experiences.

In some classes in mixed population areas, the children who speak other languages but who know little English are separated from the rest of the class during foreign language teaching. The classroom teacher often uses this period to teach these children English. This practice tends to emphasize language differences in such a way that children are isolated one from the other rather than using their language abilities and differences as a contribution toward the growth of the group. In other schools foreign speaking children participate with the language teacher in the teaching of their own language to their classmates. Such children of foreign backgrounds through the insight of their teachers seem to gain status and a sense of adequacy in the group because of their language contributions. Most foreign speaking children in our schools need such recognition.

Various audio-visual aids are being utilized to a limited extent in a number of programs. Recordings of lessons by the supervisors are used by some classroom teachers. The radio programs by the supervisors tend to result in more interest when children, while listening in their classrooms, participate by responding to the activities suggested by the radio speaker. These aids have a place in the program but should never be used as a substitute for personal contact. Children benefit most from a face-to-face relationship. Effective teaching is largely a

matter of a high degree of interpersonal relationships between the teacher and children.

4. How can teachers be prepared for foreign language programs?

Throughout the country many of the special language teachers in the elementary school have a background of high school preparation and teaching experience. Some have taken college courses for certification for teaching in the elementary grades but a majority appear to have had little experience in primary or elementary education. There appears to be a need for a much more thorough understanding of child development and the elementary curriculum by these specialists. The experience-centered, integrated curriculum of the elementary grades requires quite a different approach to the teaching of foreign languages than the methods followed at present at the secondary school level.

On the other hand, elementary classroom teachers may be deficient in their ability to speak the language of another country fluently. To meet this condition at least 35 colleges offer the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary schools as special courses. Among these are Adelphi College, Buffalo State Teachers College, Connecticut, Hofstra, Middlebury, New Mexico State College, New York University, Vermont, Western Reserve, and Yale University. Even though colleges are providing such courses, a mere handful of qualified elementary teachers with a language background are being graduated. Typical of the situation is Yale University, where Dr. Andersson in 1953 reported only three such graduates. Many school systems, interested in extending their language programs, find that the difficulty in obtaining qualified individuals presents a serious barrier in carrying out their plans. It is equally as serious in trying to carry out a continuing program; many programs throughout the country have been started and then discontinued because the one person qualified to teach the language left the system or there were not enough linguistically qualified teachers within the system at the various grade levels.

The inadequate supply of well trained language teachers is probably one of the most serious obstacles facing the future development of foreign language programs. The depth of this problem is recognized by William R. Parker, executive secretary of the Modern Language Association of America, in the June 1956 issue of the *National Parent-Teacher* magazine in which he says:

> When programs are improvised faddishly, when the teachers themselves have only a slight knowledge of the language, what happens? Johnny imitates, with pathetic accuracy, his teacher's fractured French. Mary merely

commits to memory a few isolated Spanish words that she'll forget over the summer. (And a good thing, too!)

For the surest way of discrediting language instruction, causing the public to doubt its value and relevance, is to have it done by teachers who are not qualified. There are those who say we've been making this mistake in some of our high schools for years, but that's another problem. Let's not repeat it in the grades at a level where children's more faithfully imitated accents eventually advertise our folly to the world! . . .

Hence my plea that we slow down in this great rush to get a second language in the grades . . . Why hurry to put it there before we are ready to offer the kind of language instruction that parents expect and America needs? Let's not cheat our children.[10]

These deficiencies are real and will probably continue to be long range problems. Until they are overcome, we must devise and invent other means of utilizing foreign languages in the elementary grades.

Facilitating Foreign Language Teaching in Elementary Schools

The foregoing and following comments about how foreign language might become an integral part of the curriculum do not mean that this report recommends that a language program be initiated in every community. Each school system has different curriculum problems which might be more important than the introduction of languages in the elementary schools, and which thereby require primary consideration in budget and in the staff's time and effort. However, since a knowledge of foreign languages can make a significant contribution particularly in communities with some foreign speaking population, this area of the elementary curriculum may well deserve study by interested professional staffs and by lay citizens. They might discover for their respective schools methods by which such instruction can be functional for their children not only during their school living, but in their associations in their homes and in community contacts with bilingual relatives, friends and neighbors.

Some factors which to a great extent should determine the practicability of initiating such a study by a committee as well as the type of program best suited for any particular school system are the following:

1. The social needs of the community for such instruction

[10] Quoted by ANNE S. HOPPOCK. "Foreign Languages in the Elementary School." *NJEA Review* 30:3; November 1956. (Reprint.)

2. The philosophy of the school system

3. The readiness, linguistic abilities, interest and time of teachers, parents and children

4. The professional leadership available to participate and offer guidance to such a curriculum project.

Each school system should proceed slowly and carefully in terms of its other over-all curriculum, building and budgetary needs. Results of surveys of important data and information pertaining to the foreign language resources available in the community will be helpful to an elementary language study committee.

If such a curriculum study committee were established, its members might familiarize themselves with practices in this field through reading bulletins on the subject from the U.S. Office of Education, the Modern Language Association of America, current foreign language periodicals, and also through visiting various elementary schools with foreign language programs. This study committee's recommendations and suggestions in terms of its own school system's philosophy should be discussed periodically and submitted, when completed, to the central administrative staff and the superintendent for final consideration. Whatever the size of the school system, all persons, or their representatives, affected by the introduction of a foreign language program should be involved in the study.

In a large school system a curriculum committee might be composed of:

1. A teacher representative of each grade level from different schools in the system. Such persons would be interested in serving because of their own linguistic ability, travel or other experiences

2. A representative from the music consultant staff and possibly one other special area

3. A primary and an intermediate grade representative from the elementary social studies committee

4. A teacher from the junior high and one from the senior high foreign language departments

5. Director of elementary education and possibly the secondary school curriculum coordinator

6. Coordinator of elementary curriculum

7. Representation from supervisory staffs—general curriculum consultants or helping teachers and special area consultants

8. Two helping teachers, one representing the primary (K-3); the other, the large elementary schools (K-6).

9. Two elementary principals representing the primary schools and the large elementary schools
10. A representative from the recreation department
11. Director of the adult education department
12. A representative from audio-visual aids department
13. Assistant superintendent and director of research.

All schools in the system should be represented. The foregoing committee would be quite large for effective work, since it includes a broad scope of personnel in areas of curriculum, foreign language, administration and teaching staff. Therefore, in initiating the project a general meeting might be held so as to present an overview of the entire area, and this be followed by small groups working over a period of time on specific problems or aspects of the subject. One or more culminating general meetings might be held to share reports and to get reactions to the thinking of the small groups. Parents, sensitive to language in our present-day world and a few upper elementary and high school children who are bilingual, who might have traveled or lived abroad, might be encouraged to participate in the meetings and to make suggestions for the committee's use. Interested foreign students in elementary education at nearby colleges and foreign exchange students might also be valuable resources to this committee. It might be worth while for staff members in communities near the New York area to visit the United Nations School, where many children are multilingual.

Data from surveys would reveal information which might be useful to any committee in determining interest and needs, and later in preplanning a program. Facts such as the following might be ascertained through surveys:

1. The teachers and the consultants, who:
   a. Can speak any foreign language adequately so as to make such experiences a part of their regular program
   b. Are interested in learning to speak a language
   c. Would be interested in planning to use available opportunities for making foreign language a part of their classroom and social studies experiences, and those who already do so
   d. Would like a consultant's help or a workshop to share with others various ways of making foreign language an integral part of their program
   e. Plan to travel or live abroad as an exchange teacher, and learn a foreign language

f. Are interested in using bilingual children, parents, consultants, or community resources to give their classes some foreign language experiences

2. The community resources, such as parents or laymen who may be interested and available to participate in small group classroom activities such as cooking, etc., and who would use foreign languages with the children in communicating during such experiences.

3. The languages spoken periodically or frequently as a means of communication in the homes of the children by parents, grandparents, frequent visitors or relatives, maids or other servants

4. The families who have taken or plan to take their children abroad during their elementary school years

5. The children who now speak a foreign language; which language and how acquired

6. Languages represented in adult education Americanization classes by individuals during the past two years. Some of these individuals who might be valuable resources

7. Foreign students studying elementary education in nearby colleges who speak English fluently, who have worked with children and would be interested in communicating in their native language while participating in classroom activities with a small group of children

8. Parents who would be interested if opportunity were available through the adult education or recreation program to learn the language with their child by participating in a foreign language workshop which involves trips and actual experiences. Also those parents who would prefer that only their children participate in such an out of school program

9. Parents who are interested in having foreign languages taught in the elementary schools and their reasons for this

10. A list of lay citizens in the community, shopkeepers, doctors, recent residents of other countries, who speak other languages and would be interested in meeting with small groups of children in their social studies work

11. In recruiting new teachers, the candidates might be asked to indicate the foreign languages spoken and their interests in this area.

Foreign Languages in Today's Elementary School Programs

The type of language program adopted should vary in relation to a community's needs. In general, one of the four following plans might be applicable to the various communities described:

1. In communities or in certain schools in large cities where there is a social need for improving the human relations between the ethnic groups, and/or where one or two languages other than English are used for communication by a large part of the population, a foreign language program to develop *skills* in communicating in these specific languages is very important for *all* the children. In such areas or schools special language teachers or supervisors might teach the second language of the community in the classrooms where teachers were unable to speak it. Workshops in teaching of foreign languages for teachers should be conducted. These might offer credits toward salary increments in order to encourage teachers to develop facility in the language.

In a large city with foreign speaking sections, teachers who are bilingual and thus able to talk with the children and with parents in their native languages, should be assigned to these districts. The particular language should become part of the social living experiences in every classroom. Thus, a program for all children in such communities emphasizing skill and vocabulary growth in the language for which there is a social need, in addition to affording opportunities with foreign speaking children and parents in the classroom to use the language frequently as communication, should make a contribution to better living in these bilingual communities. The choice of the language might be dependent on the extent of its use in the community.

2. In communities where there is little or no opportunity for children to hear a foreign language, where there is no real language experience in the daily living of children, instruction to develop skills and vocabulary for *all* elementary children in a particular language is unnecessary and without purpose. The objective in such areas is not to have all the children learn to speak a language, but to familiarize them with the sounds of a number of languages in developing an understanding and respect for the differences among peoples. Here teachers might well use every available opportunity through the social studies, possible travel experiences of parents, teachers and children, and through sound films and music in foreign languages to give children some language experiences related to the study of peoples, and to develop an awareness of differences in the sounds of various languages. It is important in our world today that children be exposed to Japanese, Chinese, Russian and Hindi. Some peoples who speak these languages can be found in many communities. Such language experiences with peoples of these cultural backgrounds should be an integral part of the social studies program in every school.

3. In some communities where English is spoken by practically all the residents, and the population represents many diversified cultural backgrounds, some of the residents including children have a special need or use for foreign languages to communicate with foreign speaking relatives, visitors, and maids in the homes. A number may have lived abroad or may anticipate traveling in Europe during the child's elementary school years.

In these situations the child has a need to understand and to respond in the foreign language in order to feel that he is part of the group, i.e., for social integration. A real purpose in communicating to satisfy needs also exists for individuals—children or adults—when traveling or living for months in a foreign country. The anticipation and planning for such travel experiences could serve as meaningful motivation for parents and children to share in learning a foreign language. Provision for instruction for these individuals with special needs might be planned by the school's extended educational services, perhaps through the recreational or other special programs during the summer or after school hours.

Since it is important that the language offered be functional for these children in their present living, the language should be spoken periodically in the daily home environment of the children. Thus parents who are interested in having this opportunity through an after school program should be encouraged or requested to participate in the instruction with their children. The methods of teaching such groups should be in keeping with sound educational principles such as those employed in primary reading and should be based on the experiential, aural-oral approach. The class accompanied by the instructor and interested foreign speaking visitors might, during various class sessions visit the bakery, the post office, restaurants, take shopping trips and nature walks. It is important that only the foreign language be spoken with necessary gestures to convey meaning and that the vocabulary for each class session be controlled, i.e., include only enough pertinent phrases to result in success for the participants. The vocabulary learned should be an outgrowth of communication related to the experiences. A tape recording could be made of conversations pertaining to each trip and be used for practice work following each experience. Individual recordings might be made available to class members so that correct practice at home between parents and children would be encouraged.

In the manner described, foreign language teaching would be consistent with findings related to an effective language arts program, and it would be constantly related to a social experience in which the

learner has participated. It might be valuable if several of these children and their parents could meet periodically and have further opportunities to use their new language for actual communication. The number of registrants in each of these adult education or recreation language groups should be limited so that each has ample opportunity to speak. The foregoing language activities afforded by the general curriculum in every classroom and by such special out of school instruction would tend to contribute to the feelings of status and adequacy of the foreign speaking children and adults in an English speaking community.

4. For all children in all communities a comparative language program might be devised which would develop a sensitivity to other peoples of the world. This program might, in the primary grades, bring into the school members of the community who speak other languages. These community members might, as they prepare a meal, or display objects, or talk of their countries, use foreign words and phrases. Through music assembly periods the children might learn songs and music of other lands as they use such community resources.

In the upper grades this program might be extended to include word study to show how foreign languages help to build the English language. Children might compare sounds made in imitating animals as expressed in English with those expressed in other languages. They might also compare other sounds such as those of musical instruments. Learning to count will help give the feel for pronunciation. In a study of the languages of the world, developing appreciation of their likenesses and differences and of the problems of communication between all peoples may help in understanding them. A study of the community might include a sharing of interesting foreign backgrounds by many of the people, including household help or professional persons in the particular community. Children who are bilingual or live in a bilingual home should be encouraged to retain the foreign language through using it periodically in social situations at home as well as in school. This would tend to stimulate learning opportunities for others, and help them develop a familiarity through meaningful personal experience with various languages. Attention of the children might be directed to the origin of the names of streets, foods and other products, and of cities, rivers and states in the United States. There is an infinite range from which to draw in the fields of history, population, music, literature and other areas.

In a school where some teachers are interested in teaching foreign languages, it may be valuable to provide guidance and direction in this area through voluntary workshops, meetings or discussions, so that

the language teaching activities will provide a high quality of learning opportunities for children.[11] Such meetings might achieve a unanimity of purpose among the teachers, who because of their various competencies are interested in making foreign languages a valuable part of the total teaching program and in sharing their ideas with other teachers in the school system.

Opportunities for staff members to share through meetings some of their classroom language activities could contribute to enlarging their insights.

In such programs some teachers may need to develop an awareness of the value and methods of utilizing language backgrounds of children as an aid to better understanding of other people. If some teachers do not speak any of the languages, they might solicit the help of a parent or one of the consultants in music, art or science, or of a helping teacher to use the language in the latter's experiences with the group. The introduction of a foreign language should be related to and be an outgrowth of any class interest which, in the teacher's opinion, would enrich a social understanding for the children. Sound filmstrips of stories told in foreign languages would help the children to understand the meaning of the stories and to develop a sensitivity to the sounds of the languages. Foreign speaking parents or other persons such as foreign students in nearby colleges could serve as resources and participate in providing language experiences related to classroom activities.

In general, foreign language in these recommendations is viewed not as a special subject in the elementary curriculum, but as a part of the social living and varied experiences of the children in school and in their community. Such an approach to the languages of the world's peoples should assist children who are growing up in an anxious world to develop attitudes of human understanding, and to accept and respect differences among peoples. Better international relations will tend to result to the extent that children and adults are helped to grow in their daily human relations, to share, to adequately communicate with, and to be sensitive to the feelings of peoples of differing nationality, race, language and customs.

The homes and the public schools in our democracy should serve in every way possible to further democratic principles and objectives which are conducive to our country's security and place in world affairs. If foreign languages are taught with the emphasis as indicated

[11] See W. V. KAULFERS. *Modern Languages for Modern Schools.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1942, p. 8-40, and also ALICE M. MIEL. "Does Foreign Language Belong in the Elementary School?" *Teachers College Record* 56:3; December 1954, p. 147-48.

by the criteria and foregoing comments in this report, such language experiences could have a vital role in the accomplishment of this ideal. We should discover creative ways to make many varied foreign language experiences an outgrowth of the integrated social learnings in all classrooms. We should provide for the development of skills in oral communication in particular languages only when there is a real need for and a socially justifiable interest in such learning. Contact with many languages of the world should become an integral part of every child's total elementary school experience.

Further research and experimentation need to be done, as well as more effective techniques employed in the use of films, recordings, television, and human resources to promote the building of democratic human relations in our schools and communities, and to develop an understanding, a sensitivity to and a respect for the many peoples of the world. Varied, successive, integrated foreign language experiences throughout the elementary curriculum would probably contribute to helping our future citizens to live more effectively and with greater mutuality here and abroad, with persons of different cultural backgrounds. The accomplishment of this goal is essential if America is to retain its role in democratic world leadership.

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